Coaches' Experiences Learning and Applying the Content of a Humanistic Coaching Workshop in Youth Sport Settings

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The purpose of this study was to develop and deliver a humanistic coaching workshop, as well as investigate coaches' perceptions of this workshop and their experiences using humanistic coaching. Participants were 12 coaches of grade 7–11 basketball teams from schools in low socioeconomic communities in a major Canadian city. Data were collected using semistructured interviews and personal journals. An inductive thematic analysis revealed coaches perceived the workshop to be effective in teaching the humanistic principles and how to apply them in youth sport settings. The perceived strengths of the workshop included the group discussions, use of videos, practical coaching examples, and learning about the findings from empirical studies. The participants applied the humanistic principles with their teams by asking questions that guided athlete learning and by requesting feedback about various individual and team matters. Despite facing challenges such as increased time and effort to implement humanistic coaching principles, the participants reported positive outcomes in their athletes related to autonomy, communication, motivation, and willingness to help teammates. These results are discussed using literature on youth sport coaching, knowledge translation, and youth development through sport. Findings from this study can be used to enhance youth sport coach training protocols.

Keywords: coach education, knowledge translation, youth development through sport, coach learning

Effective youth sport coaches promote a mastery-orientated climate, foster fun and play, encourage social interactions, and promote positive growth opportunities (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Moreover, youth sport coaches also act as mentors, role models, friends, and community leaders who promote the personal development of their participants (Camiré & Trudel, 2013; Falcão, Bloom, & Gilbert, 2012; Schwebel, Smith, & Smoll, 2016; Stein, Bloom, & Sabiston, 2012). Studies investigating youth development through sport found coaches' behaviours positively influenced participants' outcomes (Gould & Carson, 2008; Smith, Smoll, & Cumming, 2009). More specifically, Camiré and Trudel (2013) interviewed 18 high school football players and nine of their coaches, and found those coaches' efforts to teach life-skills through sport fostered leadership and engagement inside and outside of the sport setting. Similarly, White and Bennie (2015) interviewed 22 youth gymnasts and seven of their coaches, and found positive interpersonal relationships and effective coach behaviours helped athletes cope with